Message Text

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PAGE 01 PARIS 38191 291522Z ACTION TRSE-00

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PASS TREASURY AND COMMERCE

E. O. 11652: N/A TAGS: EFIN

SUBJECT: PILLSBURY MILLS INVESTMENT CASE

- 1. AT REQUEST OF PILLSBURY, REPRESENTATIVES OF PILLSBURY, CAMPBELL'S SOUP AND GRINGOIRE BROSSARD, THE PILLSBURY SUBSIDIARY THAT CAMPBELL'S WISHES TO ACQUIRE, MET WITH MINISTRY OF ECONOMY AND FINANCE OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS THE PROPOSED ACQUISITION.
- 2. MOF OFFICIALS (DELAROSIERE, DIRECTOR OF THE TREASURY, AND NEBOT, CHIEF OF THE INVESTMENT DIVISION) STATED THAT ANY SUCH ACQUISITION WOULD REQUIRE A FORMAL PLEDGE BY CAMPBELL'S NOT RPT NOT TO LAY OFF ANY WORKERS OF GRINGOIRE-BROSSARD FOR TWO YEARS FOLLOWING ACQUISITION. THEY INDICATED THAT WITH ACCEPTANCE OF THIS CONDITION THAT THEY COULD RECOMMEND APPROVAL AND STRONGLY SUGGESTED THAT OTHERS CONCERNED, E.G. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WOULD ALSO AGREE SINCE THIS CONDITION CAME "FROM THE ELYSEE."
- 3. CAMPBELL'S INDICATED UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EMPLOYMENT PLEDGE. DISCUSSION TERMINATED WITH RECOMMENDATION BY MOF OFFICIALS THAT CAMPBELL'S DISCUSS MATTER WITH MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. MOF OFFICIALS INDICATED THEY WOULD REPORT SUBSTANCE OF MEETING TO INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE.

4. COMMENT: SO FAR AS EMBASSY KNOWS, CAMPBELL'S HAS NOT YET TAKEN UP MATTER WITH MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. SINCE AGREEMENT TO PURCHASE EXPIRES DEC. 31, 1976, CAMPBELL'S MAY DECIDE EITHER TO DISCUSS PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH PILLSBURY BEFORE RESUMING DISCUSSIONS WITH GOF OFFICIALS OR TO SIMPLY DROP THE MATTER. CAMPBELL'S REPRESENTATIVE PRIVATELY WAS VERY NEGATIVE ON EMPLOYMENT PLEDGE SAYING HE WOULD NEVER RECOMMEND ACQUISITION OF GRINGOIRE-BROSSARD ON THIS BASIS. END COMMENT GAMMON

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